

Arthur H. Pettit House  
42 East 100 South  
Centerville  
Davis County  
Utah

HABS No. UT-122

HABS  
UTAH,  
6-CENT,  
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Rocky Mountain Regional Office  
Department of the Interior  
P.O. Box 25287  
Denver, Colorado 80225-0287

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### ARTHUR H. PETTIT HOUSE

Location: 42 East 100 South  
Centerville, Utah  
Assessor's Plat A, Block 21, Lot 3

Present Owner: City of Centerville

Present Occupant: Vacant

Present Use: Vacant

Statement of Significance: The Arthur H. Pettit House is a significant example of a 1920s period bungalow style. It is distinguished by the integrity of its exterior and contribution to the community context.

The house is also recognized as a part of the local history as the residence of Arthur H. Pettit, one time Fire Chief and business man, as well as the home of Charles R. France, a local business man.

### HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Date of Erection: c. 1928

Architect: Believed to have been Mr. Selleneit of Centerville.

### Historical Narrative

Arthur H. Pettit built an automotive service garage on the corner of 100 South and Main street in 1926. About two years later, he had a house constructed to the rear of the business, at 42 East 100 South. The architect is purported to be a Mr. Selleneit, of Centerville.

In 1946, Mr. Pettit sold the auto garage and house to two brothers, Charles R. and Richard H. France. It was Charles R. France who with his family resided in the house until his death in January 1983.

The building's historical significance is derived from the integrity of its facade, an example of a 1920s period bungalow and its historical connection to Mr. Pettit, the local fire chief and businessman and its association with the France Bros. garage. The structure is relatively unaltered except for aluminum siding, trim and a wood rail-post porch enclosure.

Biographical Information - Arthur H. Pettit

Arthur H. Pettit had the residence constructed in 1928. He was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba on the 21 of December, 1894 to William A. and Jessie Anderson Pettit, who were English immigrants. After the death of his father, the family returned to England in 1904. Once there the family was converted to the church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day-Saints (Mormons). The family later returned to Canada before moving to Utah. For about four years as a young man, Arthur Pettit worked on a ranch in Morgan County for William Parrish before joining the U.S. Air Corp during World War I. He returned to Centerville after the war as a mechanic. On August 21, 1921 he married Norma Edith Worsley in Salt Lake City.

After working out of a rented garage, Mr. Pettit built his own garage at 121 South Main Street in 1926. Two years later he had a house constructed behind the business. At this time, Arthur Pettit became the city fire chief while the fire truck was housed in the garage until the mid-1930s. During World War II Mr. Pettit continued to operate his garage while taking a shift at Hill Air Force Base.

The garage and house were sold by the Pettit's in 1946 and they moved to a ranch near Irwin, Idaho. The ranch failed and the Pettit's returned to Centerville. After this Mr. Pettit operated a dump truck until he retired. Mr. Pettit followed his wife in death five months later on July 30, 1983.

Biographical Information - Charles R. France

Charles R. France and his brother Richard H. purchased the garage and house from the Pettit's in 1946. The garage was operated as the France Service Garage. Charles R. France with his wife, Sanona resided in the house. He was born on September 18, 1921 in Centerville to Philip M. and Edna Rushforth France. After serving in the U.S. Marine Corps during World War II, he entered business with his brother. They operated the France Service Garage for 35 years. Charles France died on January 30, 1983 leaving the house to his wife.

### ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

1. Architectural Merit and Interest: The Pettit House is of architectural merit based on the integrity of its facade and its example of a 1920s period bungalow. It is further associated historically with the lives of Arthur Pettit, businessman-fire chief, and Charles France, local businessman.
2. Condition of Fabric: Good (to be demolished).
3. Summary Description: The Pettit House is a single story rectangular brick bungalow having a clipped gable roof with the ridge running lengthwise and perpendicular to the street. The structure rests on a concrete foundation with protruding porches. The main entry located on the north end facing 100 South Street maintains a clipped gabled roof supported by square, fluted posts on brick piers. This entry is flanked by a set of paired, double hung windows with a single light in each sash. The west entry is flanked by similar double hung windows with a doorway on a raised porch having a hip roof. Additional features include boxed eaves, brick window sills, a decorative vertical brick course above the foundation line and a central chimney.

Alterations to the house included a redwood rail and post wall around the west porch (c. 1984), aluminum roof trim, siding and exterior doors (c. 1984), and two window frames replaced at the rear.

### Detailed Description of Exterior

1. Foundation: Concrete
2. Wall Construction: Wood frame with exterior brick and interior lath and plaster.
3. Structural Systems: Not applicable
4. Porches, Stoops, etc.: The front entry porch is a raised concrete platform covered with a clipped gabled roof supported by brick piers and square, fluted posts. The west entry is a raised concrete covered by a hipped roof supported by redwood posts which enclose the area.
5. Openings, Doorways, and Windows: The doors are new metal doors in the same pattern as the original panelled doors. The windows are paired, double hung with single light wood sashes and brick window sills.

6. Roof - Shape and Covering: The roof is a clipped gable type with asphalt shingles on 2x4 trusses.

#### Detailed Description of Interior

1. Floor Plan: The main entry opens into the living room area with the kitchen to the right. A bedroom is located in the southeast corner and the bathroom is along the center of the south wall. The stairwell is located across the hall from the bathroom at the center of the house and leads down into the basement which contains the central furnace and two bedrooms.
2. Stairways: The stairway is located at the center of the house behind the kitchen.
3. Flooring: The floor consists of diagonal laid tongue and groove 4" wide planks on 2" x 8" stringers. A hardwood tongue and groove flooring was laid on top.
4. Wall and Ceiling Finish: The walls and ceilings are of undecorated lath and plaster. The plaster was painted while baseboards are along the walls.
5. Doorways, Doors, and Windows: The doors and windows were trimmed in flat 4" x 1/2" softwood plank.
6. Interior Trim: Interior trim was plain 4" x 1/2" softwood plank.
7. Mechanical and Electrical Equipment: The house was heated by a central heating furnace through floor vents. Electrical wiring was standard house system.

#### Site and Surroundings

1. Orientation and General Setting: The house is set in the residential area off of Main Street on which businesses were located. This area was zoned for livestock as well.

#### SOURCES OF PROJECT INFORMATION

Plans call for the demolition of the Pettit House in Winter 1988. This historical documentation was based upon data from the original survey conducted for the city of Centerville by Kent D. Johnson of Salt Lake City. The HABS report and photo documentation were prepared by the Office of Public Archaeology-Brigham Young University for the city of Centerville.

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